



COMBATTING STIGMA ON CAMPUS

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(Moderator for this call is Jennifer Bofinger.)





Speakers



Ross Szabo, Outreach Director, National Mental Health Awareness Campaign

Caitlin Stork and David Canose, Mental Health Awareness and Advocacy Group (Harvard University)

Alison Malmon, Founder, Open Minds (University of Pennsylvania)



HELP
IS NOT A
FOUR LETTER
WORD

National Mental Health Awareness Campaign

- Youth campaign launched by MTV in June 2000
- Primary goal is the development of national mental health education campaigns for youth, adults and seniors
- www.nostigma.org



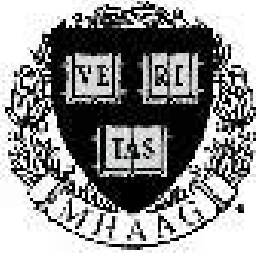
Mental Illness – Overview

- One in 5 college students experiences a mental illness
- Suicide second leading cause of death in people ages 20-24
- Millions of students experience depression, yet it is estimated that over 80% don't seek help
- Biggest barrier preventing people from seeking help is stigma



Mental Illness – Experience

"Mental illness can happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status; but, with help, people can get through it. I know because I did."



Harvard Mental Health Awareness and Advocacy Group

- Only student-led group of its kind at Harvard
- Devoted explicitly and exclusively to issues of mental health and mental illness
- Advocate for students
- More recently, thinking about what it means to be mentally healthy



Challenges (Harvard)

- Stigma
- Reaching consensus
- Recruitment
- Funding
- Publicizing events
- Making participation enjoyable
- Time commitment



Successes (Harvard)

- Mental Health Awareness and Advocacy Week
- Kay Redfield Jamison, *An Unquiet Mind*
- Andrew Solomon, *The Noonday Demon*
- Panel Discussions
- Student Narratives
- Benefit Concert (*Melodies of the Mind*)



Open Minds (University of Pennsylvania)

- Launched in Fall of 2001
- Program expansion onto other campuses
- Goal to increase students' awareness of mental health issues
- Provide resources for seeking help
- Serve as liaison between students and mental health community through peer advocacy
- Now national program called Active Minds



Challenges (Penn)

- Determining what it takes to start
- Deciding what to do as group
- Recruiting members
- Funding

After it was established ...

- Advertising
- Appeal to entire student body
- Forming bonds with University admin.



Successes (Penn)

- Listserv of more than 300 members
- Mental Health Awareness Week campaign
- Guest speakers
- Movie screenings
- Annual runs
- Grant from Penn
- Intercollegiate conference
- Local and national recognition (more chapters)



Ideas for Campus Action (Harvard)

- Introductory meetings
- Regular dinner meetings
- Testimonials (visual) on campus
- Create relationships w/faculty
- Bring in speakers
 - Faculty
 - Student health admin.
- Benefit concert



Ideas for Campus Action (Penn/Active Minds)

- Feed info to counseling services
- Presentation to psych. classes
- Silver Ribbon for Brain campaign
- Basic educational campaign
 - **Flyering, tabling, handing out brochures**
- Collaborate w/ RA's, Greek System, Psi Chi
- Schedule movie screening
- Final exams stress relief activities
- Incorporation into Freshman orientation
- Schedule speakers
- Organize run/walk



Lessons Learned

- A handful of committed members can accomplish a lot
- Publicity critical to event's success
- Audience of 10 interested people is better than audience of 30 uninterested people
- Think about funding early
- Don't define the topic of an event too narrowly

Questions/Answers





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